



99/ 094 (01)

L. W. Camp
Director
Automotive Safety Office
Environmental And Safety Engineering

Ford Motor Company
330 Town Center Drive
Dearborn, Michigan 48120 USA

April 27, 1999

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OFFICE
DEFECTS INVESTIGATION

Mr. Kenneth Weinstein
Associate Administrator for Safety Assurance
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
400 Seventh Street, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20590

Dear Mr. Weinstein:

This letter is to inform you that Ford Motor Company is expanding safety recall 97883 (NHTSA 97V-204) to include those vehicles described below.

Pursuant to Part 573 of Title 49 of the Code of Federal Regulations, Defect and Noncompliance Reports, Ford Motor Company submits the following information concerning a safety-related recall action that it is initiating.

573.5 (c) (2)

Certain 1992 model year Ford Aerostar All Wheel Drive (AWD) vehicles built at the St. Louis Assembly Plant from August 2, 1991 through December 31, 1991. This includes all 1992 AWD Aerostars not previously included in safety recall 97883.

The transfer case and rear driveshaft assemblies referred to later in this letter are supplied to Ford by the Dana Corporation, Spicer Axle Division, P.O. Box 1209, Fort Wayne, Indiana 46801. Dana's phone number is (219) 481-3093.

Because these vehicles are not produced in VIN order, information as to the applicability of this action to specific vehicles can best be obtained by either calling Ford's toll-free line (1-800-392-3673) or contacting a local Ford or Lincoln/Mercury dealer, who can obtain specific information regarding the vehicles from the Ford OASIS computer system.



99V-094 (02)

573.5 (c) (3)

Approximately 11,000 vehicles.

573.5 (c) (4)

Unknown, but believed to be dependent on high speed, high ambient temperature operation.

573.5 (c) (5)

Some of the affected vehicles may develop powertrain bending resonance or transfercase output shaft bushing displacement as a result of sustained operation at speeds in excess of 80 mph. Most of the reports also appear to be related to operation in high ambient temperature conditions (over 90 degrees Fahrenheit). The powertrain bending resonance or the output shaft bushing displacement can result in structural failure of the transmission and/or transfercase. In some cases, fluid expulsion, driveshaft separation or loss of vehicle drive can result. If the expelled fluid contacts the exhaust system, the potential for a vehicle fire also exists. There have been approximately 29 reports of these conditions on the vehicles which are the subject of this letter. Approximately four of the reports allege that the driveshaft was no longer retained by the rear of the transfercase. One of the reports alleges that a fire occurred. There are no reports of vehicle crashes and no reports of personal injury attributed to this condition on the vehicles which are the subject of this letter.

573.5 (c) (6)

Ford's investigation of this matter has been ongoing since the agency was first notified of safety recall 97S83.

573.5 (c) (8)

Ford currently plans to begin notifying owners on or about the week of June 7, 1999 to return vehicles to dealers for installation of a new transfer case housing and an aluminum driveshaft.

573.5 (c) (9)

Ford does not plan to make a public statement concerning this action since the original recall has already been the subject of a press release and has received considerable media attention. Copies of the notification letters to dealers and owners from Ford Customer Service Division will be forwarded when available.

Mr. Kenneth Weinstein
99S13

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April 27, 1999

99V-094 (03)

573.5 (c) (11)

Although this is an expansion of safety recall 97883, Ford has decided to assign campaign number 99S13 to this action for administrative purposes.

Very truly yours,


L. W. Camp

Attachment

RECALLS\99S13 SD.DOC
rjw/ae